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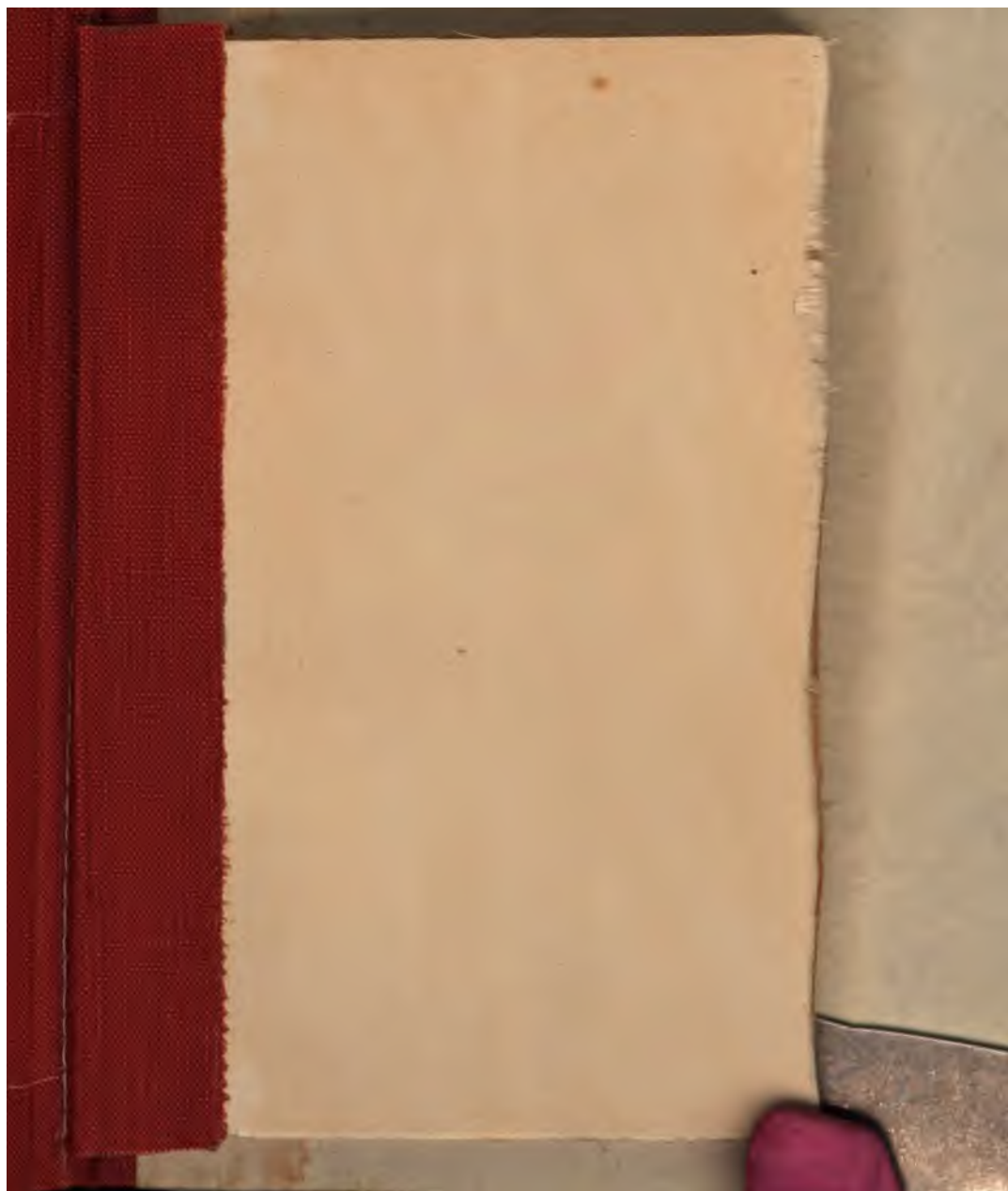
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Edward Pease
South Church Union Lectures.

THE BIBLE, AND THE BIBLE ONLY,

THE

RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS.

A LECTURE

*Delivered in the TOWN HALL, BRIGHTON, on Thursday Evening,
the 19th of February, 1852.*

BY THE

REV. J. M. NEALE, M.A.

LONDON:

JOSEPH MASTERS, ALDERSGATE STREET,
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NOTICE.

I HAD no intention, when writing the following Lecture, that it should be printed. But as several of those who heard it wished to be able to read it, while by others it was misunderstood or misquoted, it now appears, with one or two slight alterations, as it was delivered. I cannot but express my gratification at the good humour with which it was listened to by an audience, many of whom differed very widely from its sentiments.

It is proper to add, that the South Church Union is not responsible for the *details* of the Lectures delivered under its auspices.

SACKVILLE COLLEGE,

March 5, 1852.



THE BIBLE, AND THE BIBLE ONLY, THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS.

ALTHOUGH I have not the slightest intention of preaching a sermon on the present occasion, I shall begin with a text. It is not indeed to be found in Holy Scripture; but, to judge from the number of times one hears it quoted, and the stress that is laid upon it, people seem to value it quite as much as if it were. My text, then, for the present occasion will be this: "The Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants." This is quoted triumphantly at lectures, on platforms, in sermons, as if it were an unanswerable argument against Tractarians,—as if whatever else they could get over, that must be too much for them. Now I am going to show you, in the first place, that this celebrated text has nothing to do with the subject: and in the second, that if it had never so much to do with it, it is not true.

I say, it has nothing to do with the subject, and I say so for this reason. I can allow no force in it as regards myself, because I am not a Protestant. I can allow no force in it as regards the Church of England, because the Church of England never was, is not now, and I trust in God never will be, Protestant.

Yes: I know that this statement does not please you. And I trust that no one will run away with this

one sentence of mine without taking what follows. For perhaps when we come to inquire a little into the meaning of this famous word, Protestant, we shall not disagree so very much. What do you mean when you say that you are Protestants? What do you mean when you talk of the Protestant Faith, and the Protestant Religion?

The word *Protestant*, in its simple and original sense, means clearly, some thing, or some person, that protests. Therefore, in one sense, all forms of Christianity are Protestant. They all protest against vice, immorality, infidelity, and so forth. In that sense, of course, I desire also to be a Protestant.

Again, in another sense, the word Protestant means one that protests against the errors of the Church of Rome: and in that sense also I have no objection to call myself one.

But this is not the original meaning of the word. According to that, a Protestant is one who protests against the Diet of Spire, which was summoned by the Emperor Charles V., in 1529, and who appeals from that to a General Council. Now, as I very much suspect that few of you could tell me what was done in the Diet of Spire, and as I am sure that fewer would appeal to a future General Council with the intention of submitting unhesitatingly to its decrees, it is plain that you do not call yourselves Protestants in the sense in which those early followers of Luther called themselves so. And if another proof were wanting, take this:

In the sixteenth century, those who had separated themselves from the Church of Rome, were divided into two great parties: the one called Protestants, that is, the followers of Luther: the other called Reformed, that is, the followers of Calvin. And these two would have no more communion with each other than either would with the Pope. And the railing they used against each

other was perfectly frightful. Luther's gentlest terms for Zwingle, the Swiss reformer, are "dog," "beast," "hog," "Antichrist," "devil." When Luther had ended a long and useless conference with Carolstadt, the German leader of the reformed doctrines, they bade adieu to each other thus: "I trust," said Carolstadt, "that I shall live to see you broken on the wheel." "And I hope," returned Luther, "that I shall hear of your breaking your neck before you reach home."

Now, these things prove that, as then Protestants thus railed at Calvinists, while you, on the contrary, speak of the followers of Luther and of Calvin equally as Protestants, you must use the word in a very different sense from that in which the sixteenth century employed it.

Well, you may answer, but so we may. We mean by Protestant, those who protest against Popery. In that sense we say that we are Protestants, and we say that the Church of England is Protestant; and we have a right to call it so.

Not exactly. It is not enough that a word is capable of a good sense to justify you in applying it to others. I have no right to say, I am addressing an assembly of Unitarians; and yet, in the true old sense, Unitarians you certainly are, and so am I, for we all believe in one God. I have no right to say, I am addressing an assembly of Baptists; and yet Baptists you certainly are, and so am I too; for we all hold that Baptism is an ordinance of CHRIST. I have no right to say, I am addressing an assembly of Jesuits; and yet I trust that, in the true and holy sense, Jesuits we all are; that is, that we are endeavouring to be followers of Him, from Whose Blessed Name the word is derived.

Thus, you see, there is a certain conventional sense

which in the course of ages attaches itself to a word, and which individuals have no right and no power to detach from it. I will give you a more familiar example. The word *calamity*, in its original sense, means a driving storm of wind and rain that lays the corn. But how absurd would it be if I were to tell you that, the other day, as I was walking out, there came on such a *calamity* as to wet me to the skin!

Well, but you will say, that is the very thing. This conventional sense *does* apply the word Protestant to one who protests against the errors of Popery.

Then here we join issue. I say, this conventional sense applies the word Protestant to something very different. And I will prove what I say.

There is a Church, the most venerable for its antiquity in the world,—a Church, six hundred years older than our own,—a Church, that has kept up a continual succession of Bishops in the same Sees from the time of the Apostles till now; I mean the Eastern, or what people generally call the Greek, Church: a Church which contains about sixty-six millions of souls, and which does most strenuously protest against Roman errors and Roman usurpations. I will give you an instance or two. The late Patriarch of Antioch, Methodius (of whom I knew something) spent the whole of a long and active life in opposing the Latin missionaries; and his death, I believe, was hastened by his exertions in preserving from them the people committed to his charge. The present Patriarch of Constantinople, Anthimus, is exerting at this moment by sermons, by schools, by tracts, every nerve against Rome. Only a fortnight ago, I received from his press at Constantinople a book in two octavo volumes, called *Proofs against the Papists*, and a very good book it is. The present Metropolitan of Moscow, Philaret (of whom I also know something) and the present

Metropolitan of Novgorod and S. Petersburg, Nicanor, are both distinguished controversialists against Rome. But what do I talk of individuals? Thirteen years ago, two millions of Roman Catholics, including three Bishops, came over in one day to the Eastern Church: and the late Pope Gregory XVI., in his allocution to the Cardinals, of Nov. 16, 1839, spoke of this as one of the heaviest blows that had ever befallen Rome. One instance more. In 1848, Pius IX. addressed a general epistle to the Eastern Church, inviting it to return, as he called it, to a submission to Rome. On this, the four Eastern Patriarchs published a circular letter to their flocks. From that letter I will read you an extract or two; because the strength of its language, (which I do not for one moment defend,) is quite worthy of Exeter Hall, or of your own Brighton Protestant Defence Association. "Of those heresies," they say, "which have spread over a great part of the world for judgments known to the LORD, Arianism was one, and at the present day Popery is another. But like the former, which has altogether vanished, the latter also, though now flourishing, shall not endure to the end, but shall pass and be cast down, and that mighty voice shall be heard from heaven,—Babylon is fallen!" Why, you would think it was Dr. Cumming who spoke.

Again: "The Papal power hath not ceased to deal despitefully with the quiet Church of God, but every where sending forth the so-called missionaries, men that deal in souls, compasseth sea and land to make one proselyte, to deceive one of the orthodox, to destroy the teaching of our LORD, to bastardize the Divine Symbol of our faith. . . . All they that innovate, as do the Latins, whether by heresy or schism, have of their own free will put on, according to the Psalmist, cursing like a garment. Whether they be Popes, or

Patriarchs, or Clerks, or Laymen, or an Angel from heaven, if they preach any other Gospel than that we have received, let them be anathema."

Thus, you see, that the Eastern Church protests most energetically, and most effectually too, against Roman errors. Yet would any man in his senses ever call the Eastern Church Protestant? Why, in the Council of Bethlehem, held in 1672, it expressly anathematized Protestantism (though not the English Church).

Well, now, if that is Protestant which protests against the errors of Rome, *why* do you not call the Eastern Church, which does so strongly protest against them, by this name *Protestant*?

Why, you reply, because the Greek Church is every bit as bad as Popery.

Ah: now we are coming a little closer to the point. By a Protestant, then, you mean one who protests—not against the errors of Rome, but—against something held in common by the Roman and by the Eastern Church. And that something is, I will venture to say, not held more strongly by either of them than it is by the English Church. You mean by Protestant, a man who protests against the Sacramental system of the Church—against Baptismal Regeneration—against the Divine gift of the HOLY GHOST in Confirmation—against the Real Presence—against the Apostolic Succession—against the Power of Absolution. Therefore it was that I said that the Church of England never was, is not, and by God's grace never will be, Protestant: because she holds, as most necessary truths, every one of these blessed doctrines.

Of course it is quite out of the question that I should now begin to prove all this to you. That has been done again and again, probably will be done again and again. I dare say, before we put

an end to these lectures, some of us shall have occasion to enter on the subject. Now I will only observe, that a Church which thanks God for the regeneration of every person whom she baptizes, which, teaches every child to say that he has been made a member of CHRIST, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, which declares that her Bishops, after the example of the Apostles, lay their hands on those whom they confirm, that the HOLY GHOST may be bestowed upon them, which gives absolution in as strong, if not stronger terms than does any other Church under the sun, which bids her Priests, when ordained, receive the HOLY GHOST, and addresses them in those most solemn words, Whose sins thou dost remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained; I say that a Church which holds and does all this, holds and does much which is absolutely repudiated by Protestants as Protestants. A curious proof of this has just occurred. Some one has lately published a Prayer Book adapted to the use of Protestant Churches, and an uncommon quantity of adaptation it wants. The reviser acts on the principle of the old rhyme:

“ And since the Bible 's not the true one,
We'll change the text and make a new one;”

for he omits all mention of Bishops, even in Confirmation, he cuts out everything which refers to the office of a Priest, he omits the Creeds, he strikes out everything which recognises Baptism and the Holy Eucharist as conveying Sacramental grace; nay, he is not satisfied with the formula of Baptism, because it contains so express a recognition of the doctrine of the ever blessed TRINITY. Can a book be Protestant, which requires so much alteration to adapt it to the use of Protestants?

I have shown you what true Protestants agree in disbelieving: and I have said that the Church of England believes it. Now we will try to find out what true Protestants agree in believing: and then, if we should find that the Church of England disbelieves that, we shall have a double reason why we cannot call ourselves Protestants.

We will proceed by stripping off one by one the doctrines which are not held by all sorts of Protestants, till we come, if it be possible, to a residuum of doctrine that is.

Are Presbyterians Protestants?

Yes.

Then Protestants, as such, do not believe in Episcopacy.

Are Independents Protestants?

Yes.

Then Protestants, as such, do not believe in any established line of ministry.

Are Anabaptists Protestants?

Yes.

Then Protestants, as such, do not believe in Infant Baptism.

Are Quakers Protestants?

Yes.

Then Protestants, as such, do not believe in any Sacraments.

Are the Swiss Calvinists Protestants?

Yes.

Then Protestants, as such, do not believe in the Atonement.

Are the new school of German Lutherans Protestants?

Yes.

Then Protestants, as such, do not believe in Original Sin.

Are Socinians Protestants ?

Yes.

Then Protestants, as such, do not believe in our LORD's Divinity.

I know not whether you ever happened to read the proceedings of a body calling itself the Evangelical Alliance. It is a sort of amalgamation of all religions and sects, agreeing to differ on all non-essential points, while they band themselves together to attack Rome. But, when they came to define what non-essentials were, they found that, if they did not draw an arbitrary line somewhere, they should absolutely be left without any positive belief at all. So, if I remember right, they drew it at our LORD's Divinity, and the Atonement.

We, however, have now seen that, of all the Articles of the Apostles' Creed, Protestants are only agreed in believing two,—namely, the first, that there is One GOD: and the last, the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlasting. Nay, I might without any injustice go further. Socinians cannot be said really to hold the first Article, because if they deny GOD the SON, they clearly deny GOD the FATHER as FATHER: and Universalists do not hold the last clause, because they deny the eternity of punishment, which is implied in it. The Resurrection of the Body then is all that Protestants, as Protestants, of all sects and sorts, agree in believing;—I mean of matters contained in the Apostles' Creed, and in the sense of that Creed.

There are indeed several other things to which no reference is made in that Creed, which Protestants are pretty much agreed in believing, though the belief is not universal. As, for instance, that the Pope is Antichrist; that Rome is the Babylon of the Book of Revelation; that we are justified by faith only. I might mention other opinions that have been held by

some Protestants : as, for example, one which I was reading in an "Anti-Tractarian" book the other day ; "If Tractarianism be not the last and crowning effort of the enemy, under the full knowledge that his time is short, verily, the depth of his craft is unfathomable !" But from none of these opinions can we build up any positive dogmatic statement of faith which we can call Protestantism. We must try another way : and we will again refer to the sects to whom a few moments ago I alluded.

Where does the Presbyterian find that Episcopacy is not essential to a Church ?

In the Bible, according to his interpretation of it.

Where does the Independent find that no succession of ministers was intended by our LORD ?

In the Bible, according to his interpretation of it.

Where does the Anabaptist learn that infants are not to be baptized ?

In the Bible, according to his interpretation of it.

Where does the Swiss Calvinist learn to reject the doctrine of the Atonement ? Where does the Quaker learn to reject the Sacraments ? Where does the modern Lutheran learn that Original Sin is a mere invention of man ?

In the Bible, according to their several interpretations of it.

Ay, and where does the Socinian learn that our LORD is not Very God ?

In the Bible, according to his interpretation of it.

Then, I think, at last we have discovered the true and genuine principle of Protestantism. Every man has a right to interpret the Bible according to his own understanding ; after giving it the best attention which his opportunities and capacity enable him to bestow.

Now, I imagine that you will willingly accept this statement ; you all not only acknowledge its truth,

but you all glory in it. But did it never strike you that, granting this, no one, who honestly believes that he finds his creed in the Bible, is to be condemned? Suppose a Roman Catholic tells you that he finds the doctrine of Purgatory there,—that he finds the Invocation of Saints there,—that he finds the all but Divine glory of S. Mary there,—or that he finds, as he certainly does find, the Unction of the Sick there, what right, on your own principles, have you to blame him? You may say he can there find no such thing. But that has nothing to do with the point. He will say the same of you. If he assures you that, after his fullest and most earnest consideration he does find these doctrines there, all you can say, if you are consistent, is, that he has a perfect right to his opinion. Yes: you are in this inextricable dilemma. Either you must confess Roman Catholics,—and to come nearer home, Tractarians,—to have as good a right to their opinions as you have to yours,—in which case, what dreadful bigotry, intolerance, ay, and *wickedness*, is your denunciation of them;—or, when you say that all men are bound to interpret the Scripture according to their own private judgment, you mean that all men are bound to interpret the Scripture according to YOUR own private judgment.

Those are the horns of the dilemma. On one or the other it is as clear that you must certainly, inevitably, palpably, entirely, fall, as it is that two and two make four. Choose which horn you like best.

I will tell you.

You have all heard of Thomas Scott the commentator. He was a man of some powers of mind, indefatigable perseverance, and no learning. You may probably have read his *Force of Truth*. If so, you will know the correctness of what I am going to say.



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Before Scott came into public notice, he was in his belief an Arminian. Some considerations induced him to think that Calvinism was the doctrine of the Bible ; and he determined to study for himself, with no other help but prayer and thought, whether it were or were not. After the labour of some months, he became a confirmed Calvinist. And he argues to this effect:—I know, says he, that I spent vast labour in the search : I know I prayed earnestly during its course : I know that those who do so will be directed into all truth. I came to this conclusion. Therefore, I am right. Therefore, all who differ from me are wrong. Therefore, as the same promise was made to them, they must either have studied insufficiently, or prayed carelessly. If all men took the same pains that I did, they must come to the same conclusion.

Now this is at least honest and straightforward : conceited enough and presumptuous certainly, but withal, after a sort, manly. The answer, is of course, easy enough. Twenty thousand persons from the same premises may with equal justice arrive at very opposite conclusions : therefore the premises themselves are false. But I have not yet done with this book, the "Force of Truth." Most of you have heard of Sir James Stephen, once a great writer in the "Edinburgh Review," and now, I am sorry to say, Professor of Modern History in my own University, Cambridge. Among other articles which he contributed to that Review, and which he has since republished in a separate form, one treats of the character of this very man Scott, and of this very book, the "Force of Truth." Now Sir James sees the absurdity of the conclusion, but as a good Protestant, he is compelled to admit the truth of the premises. Therefore all that he can do is, to endeavour to find some flaw in the chain of

reasoning : and the difficulty and embarrassment into which he gets,—the hopeless way in which he flounders about, make that article as amusing as it is instructive.

So much for the right of private judgment, which forms the positive belief of Protestants. I am not going to waste words in showing you that the Church of England openly and palpably rejects it. Why, the very fact of her having Creeds and Articles shows that she does. What business has she, or any one else, to say, "This is the Catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved;" if she allows it not only the right, but if the right, then the duty, of every man, to interpret Scripture according to the light of his own reason? What business has she to say of one thing that it is a blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit, and to stigmatise another set of men as deserving, for their opinions, to be held accursed; if she does not hold that there is a pillar and ground of the truth, differing very far indeed from every man's own private interpretation? The thing is really not worth dwelling upon. It is too plain. All this, mark you, does not in the least prove that the Church of England is right in holding this opinion; that is quite a different question, and one with which we are not at all concerned now: it only proves that, as a fact, she does hold it.

Now then;—I showed you just now, that what Protestants, as Protestants, protest against, that the Church of England holds: and I have further showed you that what Protestants as Protestants, hold, that the Church of England protests against. Take it which way you like, negatively, or positively; and the fact is the same. Our Church has no claim to the epithet Protestant.

Let me show this a little more fully. Is it not very strange,—I call it providential,—to you it must



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simply appear unaccountable,—that nowhere throughout the Prayer Book, nowhere in the Articles, does the Church speak of herself as Protestant? I put it to you as to honest men; if you had been called to draw up some thirty-nine articles, some fifteen of which had been directed against Rome, would it have been possible for you to avoid the use of the word Protestant, ay, and a good many times too? Should we not have heard something of Protestant doctrine, or of the true Protestant Religion? How comes it to pass then that, as it is, we have nothing of the sort?

I have a very easy explanation. The Church is Catholic, and therefore she delights to repeat that word. "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church;" "I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church;" "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith;" "And the Catholic Faith is this;" "This is the Catholic Faith, which, except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved;" "more especially, we pray for the good estate of the Catholic Church." The Church of England is *not* Protestant, and therefore she nowhere employs that term, though many of those who call themselves her children employ it for her. I remember a curious instance of this. I knew of an old Yorkshire squire, a very good man too in his way, who was not at all satisfied at the omission of the word Protestant in the Prayer Book. Therefore on Sunday, he used to stand up conspicuously in his pew, and in the Creed, which he repeated lustily and sturdily, thus alter the third division: "I believe in the HOLY GHOST—the Holy *Protestant* Church."

Some of you may not be aware, that the only time the question has in any way been put to our Church, whether she will call herself Protestant, her answer was

clearly in the negative. In the time of Queen Anne, an address was proposed in the upper House of Convocation, which applied that term to the English Church. After a struggle between the two Houses, the lower House succeeded in altering the obnoxious phrase. All honour to those bold and persevering Priests,—though it be now the fashion to calumniate them,—who defended the cause of their Church against the time-serving comprehension-seeking Bishops of the upper House!

But you will say, have none of the great writers of the Church of England called themselves Protestants? Assuredly they have. But, up to the Revolution, they used the term in a very different sense to that in which you now use it.

Laud, for example, declared on the scaffold that he died true to the Protestant religion; Nicholas Ferrar, who was the founder of a religious house in Huntingdonshire, called himself a Protestant. So did those who would now be termed the most *ultra* of Charles I.'s divines; such as Montague and Wren. Bishops who encouraged confession, set up stone altars, prayed for the dead, and employed crosses, ay, and crucifixes, called themselves Protestants; they simply meant that they were not Romanists. The word then had not its present conventional meaning; nay, it was used in the very same way that old fashioned people use it now, in contradiction to the term Puritan. I remember that Carleton, who was Bishop of Chichester in James I.'s time, speaks of the difference between Protestant and Puritan doctrine. I have myself heard an old-fashioned lady express her horror that any Protestant should think of attending a Meeting House. In short, Protestantism had not then been blown upon: and therefore those great men, innocently, and without any sinister meaning, employed it.



The divines of the 18th century, that truly dark age, employed it also. When Hoadley was denying the Sacraments, and eating the bread of a Sacramental Church; when Blackburne was running his career at York; when Clayton was consulting an adulteress as to the composition and doctrine of his charge; when Lavington was persecuting the Methodists, and Potter the Evangelicals; when Cornwallis was dancing away his evenings at Lambeth, till George III. peremptorily interfered; then, I confess, the Prelates of the Church of England gloried in the name Protestant. But I do you more justice than to believe that you would quote such men as authorities.

It is a little to wander from my immediate subject, but I should like to say a few words on what you are very fond of talking about—Protestant simplicity in worship.

The Dutch pride themselves, and perhaps with some truth, on being the most Protestant nation in Europe. Their worship, I confess, has a good deal of simplicity. But you would be astonished, I think, in all their great churches, to see the enormous roodscreens which separate their chancels from the nave;—and these, mind you, not kept up from ancient times, but erected in many instances quite lately. There has been a good deal of nonsense talked about the screen at S. Paul's church in this town. I should be very sorry to hurt my friend Mr. Wagner's feelings, but I am sadly afraid that a Dutch Calvinist, so far from thinking it exaggerated or Popish, would consider it diminutive and not sufficiently suited to the demands of a large church. And if you went into Lutheran Germany, there, indeed, you would be astonished; you would see perhaps, five or six altars in the same Church, all magnificently vested,—all furnished with candlesticks,—all, not with crosses, but with crucifixes—images of Saints, the ta-

pers on the altars lighted during Divine Service, and hung, in many cases, before the images,—those images garlanded with flowers,—all the old chants retained ; and, if you went into Sweden, where, mark you, it is grievously penal to be a Roman Catholic, besides all this, you would find the old vestments also retained. So much for Protestant simplicity. The only place in Europe where you would find what you want, is in the Protestant cantons of Switzerland.

But I now come to the second part of what I proposed to prove. I say that with respect to those who really are Protestants, the text with which I began is not true. The whole Bible and the Bible alone does not form their religion. Not the whole Bible, because they, in point of fact, reject a good deal that is in Holy Scripture : not the Bible alone, because they hold a great deal that is not in Holy Scripture.

Let us begin with the latter assertion first. And here we come to the question that has so often been asked, but that never has been, and on Protestant principles never can be, answered, Why do you believe in Holy Scripture itself? It is nonsense to quote texts to show its inspiration, its authority, its sufficiency : nothing—it stands to reason—can prove itself. By a similar method of argument, you may convince yourself of the inspiration of the Koran. In the Koran you may find plenty of texts asserting its excellence, its inspiration, its binding authority. So you may argue for the divine origin of the Book of Mormon. But the thing is too plain to need proof.

Now, ask this question at the next Brighton Protestant Defence Meeting. A set of men meet to defend the infallibility of the Bible against the traditions of men. Ask any one of them to tell you how he knows the Bible to be infallible. Nothing more important can be asked. Nothing, on Protestant prin-

principles, more impossible to answer. As Mr. Newland said the other night,—“I can tell you: but you cannot tell me.”

I can tell you the only thing that your lecturer, or your president, or chairman can say. (He *ought* to say,—“I do not know:—I take it for granted.”) But he probably would say something of this kind: that those who study the Bible find it so admirably adapted to their own wants, their own distresses, their own difficulties,—they find it so true a picture of what they feel within themselves, and of what they see in the world around them,—that the internal evidence convinces them that it must be the Word of God.

Now, do not misunderstand me. I do not undervalue internal evidence. When, from external evidence you know that the Bible is indeed God’s Book, then you may find this and a great deal more to confirm you in your certainty. But that has nothing to do with the point. The question is, supposing a man tells you,—I do not find this in the Bible: therefore it is no argument to me:—how are you to answer him then? Some of you may have read that infamous book, Miss Martineau’s correspondence with Mr. Atkinson. Well,—she there lays it down that great part of the Bible is so utterly repugnant to her moral sense, that she is convinced, from internal evidence, it cannot be the Word of God. What now can you say? The Bible meets your moral wants, and therefore you believe it. By parity of reason, the Bible does not meet Miss Martineau’s moral wants, and therefore she does not believe it. And you have no right to say that there is any antecedent sin which prevents the Bible suiting her moral wants. Who told you that? How can you dare to assert it? I know very well that, with the sort of logic which Mr. Thelwall or Sir Thomas Blomfield use, they would answer, The Bible says so. That

is the kind of arguing in a circle which Protestants, to be consistent, must employ. Thus :

The Bible is the Word of God.

How do you know that ?

Because it is suited to the moral sense of all good men.

How do you know that ?

Because if any man tells me that it is not suited to his moral sense, he is a bad man.

How do you know that ?

Because the Bible says so.

How do you know that it says true ?

Because the Bible is the Word of God.

Poor Protestantism ! What it argues from, and what it argues to, are the same ! It puts the world very nicely on the elephant, and the elephant pretty comfortably on the tortoise : but the unfortunate tortoise must rest on what it best may.

Again : suppose a Mohammedan were to argue in the same way : how are you to answer *him* ? His arguments are just as good as yours—yours are every whit as good as his—and so you neither of you can convince the other. Depend upon it, by this way of talking, by making the Bible its own witness, and its own proof, you are playing into the hands of infidels. It is a very solemn thought, that Protestantism has more than once joined with infidelity : never perhaps more remarkably so than in the Antipapal Aggression of last year. That by the by.

Well ;—still I ask my question. How do you know the Bible to be the Word of God.

“ By evidences,” you will at last be forced to answer.

But stop ! stop !—you set out by saying that the Bible, and the Bible only, was the religion of Protestants. Not a word about evidences then. Protestants have nothing to do with extraneous evidences. The Bible *only* is their religion.

"I cannot find it: 'tis not in the bond."

How dare you bring them forward, and thus give the lie direct to the Protestant watchword?—Because you cannot help it.

Yes;—on evidence you believe: and so do I. But on what evidence?

You believe: some of you, because you have read books, written by fallible men, quoting a number of passages, bringing forward a chain of authors, from the SAVIOUR's time till now, and all establishing the truth of the Christian religion. Some of you, because you have been told that there are such books. Now, I wonder how many of you here have ever studied the subject of evidences for yourselves; I wonder of those who have, how many have themselves investigated and verified the passages quoted. It comes to this then: that you believe the Scripture to be infallible on the testimony of fallible men. Now, it is a rule in the art of war, no fortress can be stronger than its weakest point. Apply that to the present subject. How can you call the Bible infallible, when you acknowledge that those who tell you it is so are fallible themselves?

But you will ask me, how do I know the truth of the Bible? Well, that is a little wandering from our subject: but I will answer you shortly.

I find, as matter of notoriety, a body at this time existing in the world, professing to be the keeper, and guardian, and interpreter of a book called the Bible, and claiming for it a divine authority. I find, on common historical evidence, that for eighteen hundred years this body has existed, to all intents and purposes the same as at the present day:—that it has always appealed to this book as infallible, always received it as of Divine Authority, —and has from its origin till now supported its belief, and proved its mission, by miracles. I know that the Church, eighteen hundred years ago, received that

book, and I see prophecies in that book of the perpetual existence, and of the infallibility of this very Church. I receive the Bible then, because the Church bids me receive it, but—mark you—for no other reason.

But, when I said that Protestants did not receive the Bible only, I did not mean in the sense alone in which I have been speaking. I say that Protestants, at least the very great majority, have received, and clung to, doctrines, of which not one syllable is to be found from one end of the Bible to the other.

Let me take an instance. Luther said that the doctrine of justification by faith was of such importance, as to be the article of a standing or falling church. Now how is that doctrine generally understood and received by Protestants? I am sorry,—even for the sake of illustration—to have to enter into such solemn subjects:—but the point I am proving is one of no small importance. Now, is not this what *you* mean by justification by faith? That, whereas we are miserable sinners, and have many ways broken the strict laws of God's justice, and therefore should be most justly condemned at the last day—God, if we put our faith in CHRIST, will impute or reckon to us the righteousness of CHRIST as if it were our own, and thus, though we are not really righteous, will esteem us as if we were? Is not this the way in which the Parable of the wedding garment is usually interpreted by Protestants? You know it is. Page after page of Milner, and Scott,—volume after volume of Calvin, I might quote, if there were any need, to prove this.

Well now,—it is nothing to my argument whether this be a true and holy doctrine, or altogether false and unholy. I simply say that it is a tradition which Protestants have received to hold over and above the Bible: for not a syllable of it is there to be found in Holy Scripture. I defy any one to quote me the



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semblance of a passage. And yet you will hear this doctrine laid down in the pulpit; and such a text as "Abraham believed in the LORD, and IT was imputed to him for righteousness," brought in to prove a doctrine with which it has no more to do than it has with the Newtonian system.

Again: the Protestant observance of the Sunday, as it is in this country, and more especially in Scotland, (for on the continent it is widely different,) is a most curious instance where a tradition, not only not founded in Scripture, but opposed to many passages of it, is urged forward with the greatest vehemence by those who are the loudest in crying, "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible!" Did it never strike you that—if you merely take the Bible—you break the fourth commandment twice a week? You break it on Saturday, because the command is, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy GOD:" and you break it on Sunday, because the command is, "Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work:" whereas, one of these six days you observe as a day of rest. But, if you give up that commandment in its strictness, then you stand convicted of having foisted into your Creed a tradition, of which you cannot find the least trace in the New Testament. Our LORD never speaks of the Sabbath but to rebuke its superstitious observance: S. Paul once mentions it, and he does the same: and so all that is left to you is the one text in which S. John tells us he was in the Spirit on the LORD's day. Granting that to mean Sunday, what does it prove? assuming it, which is probably the case, to mean Easter Day, and it serves your turn less, if less be possible.

I will give you a curious instance how other Protestants, who, like those of England, profess to receive the Bible, and the Bible only, regard this tradition. I

once made acquaintance abroad with a Lutheran minister, a very good, hardworking man in his way. All his heart was in his parish; he had been forced to travel for his health, and he could hardly speak of it without tears. A most devoted man indeed to his work and to his people. Well: we came together to England, where he had never before been; and, as he did not speak English, I took him up to London with me, and served as his interpreter. On the Sunday, I took him to St. Paul's in the morning and the afternoon, and very well pleased he was. Afterwards I asked him how he would like to spend the evening. "Why," said he, "let us go to the opera." "The opera!" I cried: "Why, you don't suppose that we have the opera on Sunday?" "Why not?" said he. And "Why not?" if you are tied down to Protestant principles, say I too. No. I can only answer on higher principles than Protestantism.

Now let us go to the other side of the question, and see how Protestantism diminishes from the Bible, as we have just seen how it adds to it. And in the outset let me just point out to you a very great difference between Protestant tradition and Catholic tradition. If a text *appears* to contradict what we hold, we are not surprised at it. We never teach that Scripture is easy to be understood, on some of its most vital doctrines. We never teach that it needs no other interpreter than prayer and study: we believe it does; and we know who is the divine interpreter of the Divine Word,—namely, the Church. But you *do* say that, on all essential points, the Bible is easy to be understood. You say that the most ignorant person may there find all the vital doctrines of Christianity clearly expressed. Therefore, if a text seems to contradict you point blank, it is a very serious thing. You are bound, on your own principles, to take it as it stands, and not to

twist it about and bring forward recondite explanations. Now let us see whether you do.

S. Peter has these words: "The like figure whereunto, even Baptism, doth also now save us." What can be clearer? "Baptism doth save us." Why no Tractarian can say it more boldly, and few would say it so boldly. But this is not Protestant doctrine: and therefore, when S. Peter said this, he said it (of course) in a non-natural sense. Let Scott the commentator tell you what he meant.

"Baptism doth save," says S. Peter.

"Thus the Baptismal water forms, as it were, the sign of salvation," interprets Scott.

What! call *this* an interpretation? What, that it means the same to say Baptism *doth* save,—or Baptism is a sign of salvation,—ay, and not so—but Baptism is, *as it were*, a sign of salvation? What, this the practice of those who theoretically hold the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible? what, this the faithfulness of those who call us unfaithful—the natural sense of those who taunt us with non-natural senses?

"Bark cures the ague," says a physician, as he administers a dose to his patient.

"What did the doctor say?" inquires the sick man, when the physician is gone.

"Oh," replies the attendant, "he said that bark is, *as it were*, the sign of the ague being cured."

Most wise and faithful interpreter!

But I have not done with this wonderful man yet. I have read you his explanatory note: let me now read you his practical improvement.

"Let us beware," he says, "that we rest not in outward forms, as if that Baptism could save us which only washes away the filth of the flesh."

I confess that, much as I knew of the non-natural sense in which Protestantism very often interprets the

Bible, I was startled to find so audacious a contradiction in terms, so fearful an instance of giving the lie direct to its words.

Let us take another instance. A poor simple man, reading the Gospel according to S. Matthew, comes upon this verse: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Why, he would say, here is a most fearful power of some kind given by CHRIST to S. Peter. Was it given to him alone, or to the other Apostles also, and if so, was it given to others beside them? It is merely a form of speaking, replies a Protestant interpreter. It only means that if GOD forgives a sinner, and His ministers declare to that sinner that he is forgiven, he may take comfort in their declaration. But is not this something like a truism? inquires our simple friend. And in that sense has not every one, as well as a minister, the keys of the kingdom of heaven? And is it not remarkable, that our LORD should have made with so much solemnity a gift which, according to you, was no gift at all? And is it not yet more strange, that in the parallel passage, the words, Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained, He should have introduced them by those most solemn words,—Receive ye the HOLY GHOST?—That is all very plausible, replies the Protestant; but if you attribute any further meaning to those words, you fall into Popery; and whatever we do, we must take care not to do that.

Now I will give you another example of explaining away the words of CHRIST, and for something of a similar reason. Our LORD says, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now the famous Paley preached



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a sermon on this subject. Of course one question which he had to discuss was: What is meant by the new birth? He did not like to say that it was Baptism, because that might have been thought Popish: he did not like to say that it was Conversion, because that might have been thought Methodistical. And so he says, that the expression *means nothing*: nothing, that is, in the present time, and under present circumstances.

You will confess that this is awful. But why more awful than to tell us that "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven" means nothing: nothing, that is, in the present time, and under present circumstances?

Now, I will take another subject, but one on which I should not have entered, had not Mr. Thelwall afforded me so remarkable an example of the manner in which Protestants deny those parts of the Bible that they do not like, that I am unwilling to pass by it, especially as what he said may be fresh in the remembrance of some of you.

A plain man, taking up his Bible reads this saying of our Lord's: "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you." And again: "The Bread that I will give is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Now, let any man read first that passage, and then the account of the institution of the Holy Eucharist; and will any one say that he would not, whether mistakenly, or not, is not the question, but that he would not *naturally*, refer the one to the other? Says Mr. Thelwall, That is rank Popery. The words can have no such a meaning. Why not? He gives two reasons:

The first is, that the Holy Eucharist was not then instituted. Now it is very remarkable, though of course Mr. Thelwall and other Protestants pass that

quietly by, that our LORD speaks in the future sense, —“the bread that *I will* give is My flesh, which *I will* give for the life of the world.” But even if this were not so, by Mr. Thelwall’s argument, none of the prophecies in the past or present tense, such as those in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, can apply to our LORD, because He was not then come. This argument, however, is older than Mr. Thelwall, but I really give him credit for his second. And it is a wonderful example of what a man will do to twist Scripture, rather than accept it when contrary to his own traditions. He says: Let us imagine that the whole Bible were lost except the Gospel according to S. John. As that Gospel contains no account of the institution of the Holy Eucharist, a reader could never interpret those passages in the 6th chapter of that Sacrament. But what nonsense, and worse than nonsense is this! Why, every man may get rid of every doctrine that he does not like by the same simple expedient, of supposing those chapters or books of the Bible lost which happen to contain it. And curiously enough, in that same chapter, is a striking instance of the absurdity into which Mr. Thelwall runs. Our LORD there says: “What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?” Can any one doubt that this refers to the Ascension? According to Mr. Thelwall, it cannot. For supposing all the Bible except the Gospel of S. John to be lost, as that Gospel contains no account of the Ascension, a reader could never interpret that text of the Ascension.

Now, I will give you two more instances how Protestants, notwithstanding their watch-word, take anything rather than the Bible, as true, when its plain sense is against them. You have all heard of Zwingle, the Swiss reformer. He was the first who taught that the Holy Eucharist is a mere bare sign, and that our

LORD'S Words—This is My Body,—mean,—This is a figure of My Body. He was defied to bring forward from Holy Scripture any one passage where *This* means, *This is a figure of*. He tells us, and it is no matter whether the story be true or false, it proves thus much, that Protestants would do anything to get rid of such parts of the Bible as make against them; he tells us that he puzzled and puzzled over his challenge, and was hopeless of finding any other example. He had been thinking deeply on the matter, when a supernatural figure, so he says, appeared, and said: "Fool! Why not answer him: *Ye shall eat it in haste: It IS the LORD'S Passover.*" And Zwingle joyfully caught at the text.

Carolstadt, the German reformer, pressed by the same difficulty, explained the text thus: Our LORD, he said, administered the Holy Eucharist to His Apostles with the words, Take, eat, and then pointing to Himself, added, *This is My Body!*

But now to draw to a conclusion.

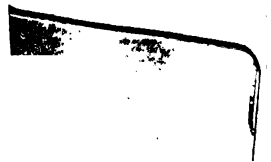
Shall we not then be ashamed to call ourselves by a name which pledges us to no faith, but merely to a negation of all faith? that, taking its very title from division, perpetuates a contradiction of our LORD's last prayer, That they all may be one? that is shared by heretics and unbelievers of all kinds and degrees? that has no principle but self-contradiction, no logic but an argument in a circle,—whose profession is an unreality, and whose watchword is a lie? Shall we not rather with all our hearts and souls cling to that blessed title which, by its very name, embraces all mankind in the arms of its love,—which speaks of peace upon earth and good will to men,—for which so many martyrs have rejoiced to shed their blood,—for which so many confessors have toiled and have suffered—a name which must be victorious over every enemy,

which has the promise of infallibility against all error,—a name proper to that Church which, as universal in space, is to receive the heathen for her inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for her possession : which, as universal in time, will endure as long as the world lasts, yes, and after the world shall pass away, even for ever and ever ?



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